



Huron-Superior Catholic

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE

Family Members Working Within the Board

For the purpose of this policy, family members are defined as spouses, domestic partners, daughters, sons, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, sisters, brothers, mothers-in-law or fathers-in-law.

As a large employer that has many schools in smaller communities, HSCDSB does have members from the same family who work within the same learning community. Employment of family members in situations where one family member has direct influence over the other's conditions of employment / student achievement (e.g., salary, hours worked, sick leave, expenses, discipline, awards, honours, privileges, assessment and evaluation) is inappropriate and to be avoided wherever possible. Such situations are considered to be conflicts of interest. See Policy 6021: Conflict of Interest for more detail.

If one family member has influence over another family member's conditions of employment / student achievement, the following should occur:

- In collaboration with the supervisor, the involved employees will have a conversation to discuss the scenario and various options to address the situation.
- Options include, but are not limited to:
 - One employee may apply to transfer to another area / workplace.
 - An employee may be denied a transfer to a particular location.
 - If an alternative classroom is available, the family member may be placed in a different classroom.
 - The reporting structure in the department may be revised so that one employee no longer has direct influence over the other employee's conditions of employment.

In some cases, a concern over conflict of interest may arise involving other close relatives, such as aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, or relatives by marriage. Alternatively, issues related to family relationships may arise that have no connection to conditions of employment / student achievement (e.g., two spouses who work in the same school that their children attend may get divorced and a custody battle ensues in which staff members are encouraged to take sides or provide information to one side over another).

In any case, when employees are unsure about a potential conflict, or when supervisors of employees perceive a real or perceived conflict of interest, they should fully disclose the circumstances to their supervisor. In situations where either a conflict of interest has been identified and/or issues related to family members / relatives interfere with the effective functioning of the workplace and/or achievement of students, the board reserves the right to transfer an employee to another location.

Visiting the Workplace

HSCDSB's schools and buildings are places of instruction and learning. Instructional times are prioritized and are intended to have minimal interruptions. Children and family members are welcome on board property for specific sanctioned events. For example, employees may bring children or family members to appropriate school / board-sponsored activities, such as Christmas concerts or school plays.

Supervisors may approve non-routine visits that do not interfere with an employee's ability to perform his/her work functions or the productivity of work.

Relationships at Work

Employees are encouraged to socialize and develop professional relationships in the workplace, provided that these relationships do not interfere with the work performance of either individual or with the effective functioning of the workplace. Employees who engage in personal relationships, including romantic and sexual relationships, should be aware of their professional responsibilities and will be responsible for ensuring that the relationship does not raise concerns about favouritism, bias, Catholic teachings, ethics, and conflicts of interest. In cases of doubt, advice should be sought from the Manager of Human Resources.

Romantic and/or sexual relationships between employees, where one individual has influence or control over the other's conditions of employment, are inappropriate. These relationships, even if consensual, may ultimately result in conflict or difficulties in the workplace. If such a relationship currently exists or develops, it must be disclosed:

- The supervisor or employee who has influence or control over the other's conditions of employment has an obligation to disclose his/her relationship to the principal / supervisor.
- The other employee involved in the relationship is encouraged to disclose the relationship to the principal / supervisor.

Relationships with Students and Parents

When employees interact with students, staff members are in a position of trust and power. These relationships must not jeopardize the effective functioning of the school or board by the

appearance of either favouritism or unfairness in the exercise of professional judgment. In relationships with students/ parents, employees are expected to be aware of their professional responsibilities and to avoid apparent or actual conflicts of interest, favouritism or bias. Personal relationships can be inclusive of, but not limited to, coaching outside of work, parish relationships, neighbourhood friendships, and personal relationships within the community.

Disciplinary Action

If a relationship is deemed to be inappropriate under these guidelines, the appropriate principal / supervisor, will consult with the Manager of Human Resources to determine appropriate action. Actions taken may include, but are not limited to, an agreed upon transfer, a change in workplace or assignment, and/or a change in reporting structure.

If an employee, whether or not involved in the relationship, believes s/he has been and/or is being, adversely affected by a relationship, s/he is encouraged to contact the principal or supervisor.

When relationships develop into situations that may be viewed as harassment or discrimination, employees should refer to the Workplace Harassment Guideline under Policy 4024: Safe Schools and Workplaces. Should relationships in the workplace not be disclosed, interfere with workplace performance or negatively affect school / board climate, Policy 6002: Progressive Discipline of Employees will be followed.